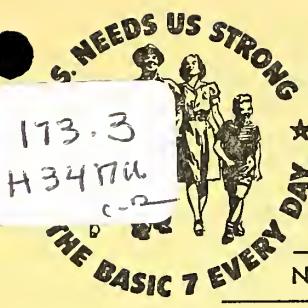


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RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE NUTRITION SECTION OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Fifty-four delegates from all sections of the United States, and representing a wide variety of interests in health, attended the meetings of the Nutrition Section of the National Health Assembly held in Washington, D. C., May 1-4, 1948. This section had as its chairman Dr. Frank G. Boudreau, Director of the Milbank Memorial Fund.

Copies of the proceedings may be obtained from the Director of Information, Office of the Administrator, Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.

The six subsections made recommendations including the following:

1. Organization and Administration

That State-wide nutrition committees or councils be established.

That a cooperative nutrition education program be developed and promoted on National, State, and local levels.

That public opinion be aroused to the importance of nutrition education as a part of a health education program.

2. Food Supplies

That food production programs be based on dietary needs in terms of an expanding population.

That recognition be given to the relationship between the natural resources of our country—forests, water sources, animal life, and productive soils—and the health of our people.

That increased attention be given to improving the nutritional quality of food as produced and to conserving its nutrients from the farm to the consumer's table.

Recognizing that malnutrition exists among many individuals and groups despite a plentiful average per capita nutrient supply, that special consideration be given to production and distribution measures that will make an adequate and acceptable diet more readily available to these groups. Such measures should be accompanied by educational programs geared particularly to the needs of those concerned.

That the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act be amended to provide the administrator with further authority when establishing definitions and standards of identity for processed foods, to include therein standards of nutritional quality, where feasible.

That research on the nutritive value of foods and their combinations, as they occur commonly in diets, be encouraged to keep pace with advances in research on the physiological aspects of nutrition.

3. International

That a National Nutrition Council be organized as recommended at the Hot Springs Conference of 1943.

That periodic sample surveys of the nutritional status of the United States population be made.

That the Council promote international exchange of students and workers in the field of nutrition through United Nations agencies.

That this Assembly urge the United States Government to ratify promptly the constitution of the World Health Organization.

That the Economic Cooperation Administration seek advice and guidance of experts in food and nutrition with special knowledge of dietary requirements and food supply problems in this country and abroad.

4. Professional Training

That a planned program of instruction in nutrition be included in the training of all persons who are to be engaged in activities related to health. This applies particularly to physicians, health officers, dentists, nurses, health educators, social workers, and teachers.

That personnel with specialized training in nutrition be increased in number.

5. Research

Recent research points to further possible conservation of maternal and infant lives through improved dietary practices during pregnancy and the neonatal period. Clinical studies demonstrate that the adequately fed mother has a better opportunity for an uncomplicated pregnancy, a less traumatic labor, and a physiologically mature,

full-term infant. An effective and basic plan for improved health of the next generation cannot be perfected until more complete knowledge of nutrition of mothers, infants, children, and adolescents has been established.

6. Education

That the general goal of nutrition education be the establishment of good food habits in every individual. To accomplish this, a nutrition education program should be planned around the needs of pregnant and lactating women, infants, preschool and school children, adolescents, industrial workers, old people, chronic invalids, and homemakers.

That the effectiveness of various teaching methods be studied to discover the motivations that can be utilized in improving food habits.

That printed materials and visual aids be made more effective and that classified lists of such material be prepared and made available upon request.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

The first of what is expected to be an annual National Conference on Community Improvement was held in Washington on May 24-26. This conference laid the groundwork for a continuing program to encourage communities to develop and improve their own areas.

The national significance of this conference was emphasized in the opening speech by its president, Carroll M. Shanks, president of the Prudential Insurance Company of America. He developed the theme that "no nation is stronger than the communities of which it is made." Harold W. Dodds, president of Princeton University, spoke on The Community—Bulwark of Democracy; other speakers also stressed the importance of community development programs. Many instances were presented of outstanding initiative taken by various communities to step up their own communities' advancement along physical, educational, recreational, and social lines through the democratic processes of coordinated action.

Special emphasis was placed on coordinated action and from this point of view the conference may be of particular interest to members of nutrition committees. A summary of the proceedings of the conference will be available at a later date through the National Council for Community Improvement, sponsor of the conference. The Council, in accord-

ance with the resolutions of the conference, will continue to function as a clearing house of information on community improvement programs.

FOOD AND NUTRITION BOARD REVISES RECOMMENDED DIETARY ALLOWANCES

The Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council at its spring meeting, May 7-8, in Washington, considered certain revisions in the Recommended Dietary Allowances. The recommended allowances for protein, iron, vitamin A, and ascorbic acid were not changed.

Caloric level recommendations were reduced moderately as a more explicit recognition of the fact that a surplus of calories may be harmful whereas a liberal allowance of the other nutrients may be beneficial. Desiring to discourage overeating and overweight, the Board based its recommendations for caloric allowances on the thesis that "the proper calorie allowance is that which, over an extended period of time, will maintain body weight or rate of growth at the level most conducive to well-being." Recognizing that body size, sex, heritage, and climate all affect caloric requirements, the Board was hesitant in adopting single caloric values but did so for practical considerations.

The recommended calcium allowance for adults was increased from 0.8 to 1.0 gm. per day. The Board recognized that attainment of this increased calcium level might cause embarrassment to dietitians and planners of the food supply. However the Board deemed that the accumulated evidence justified the increased allowance of calcium.

Recommended thiamine allowances were modified downward slightly because of some evidence indicating decreased thiamine requirements for calories expended by increased activity above the 2,000 level. The basis of 0.5 mg. thiamine per 1,000 calories was retained up to the 2,000 calorie level.

Recommended niacin values remained as 10 times the recommended thiamine levels. Recommended riboflavin allowances were changed to 1.8 mg./day for men and 1.5 mg./day for women relating to body weight rather than to caloric intake. It is contemplated that the revised text and tables for the Recommended Dietary Allowances will be published in the near future.

Another action of the Board was taken to clarify its position with regard to fortified or modified forms of milk.

The Board reaffirmed its position in not endorsing vitamin fortification of the general fluid milk supply other than with vitamin D. However, it indicated that its decision should not be interpreted as grounds for prohibiting investigation of and market trials with milk modified by the addition of appropriate ingredients in reasonable amounts. The Board reemphasized that wider and more uniform consumption of milk is highly desirable for public health.

"METHODS OF CHANGING FOOD HABITS"

An article with the above title by Dr. Marion Radke of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Nutrition News, published by the National Dairy Council, gives the results of some experiments undertaken to develop effective methods of changing food habits. These experiments were carried on at the Harvard University School of Public Health with three groups—mothers of newborn infants, homemakers, and junior high school students. The effect of the three educational methods were compared: (1) individual instruction, (2) lecture, and (3) group method of discussion-decision.

The effectiveness of each method was measured by the number of subjects making the desired change in food habits immediately after and several months after the experiment. The discussion-decision method in all experiments was superior to both individual instruction and lecture.

In the discussion-decision method a leader discusses nutrition problems with a small group similar in age and background. The leader, keeping in mind the group members' values and habits, guides but does not dominate the discussion. She gives technical information and helps the group to face the obstacles which stand in the way of change. Thus, the mother who cannot get her children to drink enough milk gets the help of other mothers who suggest ways of including milk in the diet. After thorough discussion, the group leader asks the group to make some decision for action. The decision is an extremely important part of the procedure, for through it members link their discussion and their motivation to change to a definite, committing action.

This group method promises to be applicable in widely different circumstances involving groups. The experiments on change indicate that knowledge

isn't enough to change behavior, but motivation linked to the individual's own decision in a group setting to do something leads more frequently to that change.

A more detailed account of the experiments with the high school students is given on pages 23-31 of the Journal of the American Dietetic Association for January 1948.

QUALITY GRADING OF MEAT BY PMA

The United States Department of Agriculture uses the terms Choice, Good, Commercial, and Utility in grading meat commonly found in retail meat stores. Meat advertised as AA or A, unless also stamped with a USDA grade name, is not federally graded. AA and A are carryovers from the wartime practice of farmers and some slaughterers who were permitted to grade their own meat in compliance with OPA regulations. Such designations do not now have any relation to USDA grades, the Meat Grading Service of PMA says.

Under USDA standards, meat is graded according to the proportions of fat, lean, and bone, and the quality characteristics of the flesh. On federally graded meat the grade terms, Choice, Good, Commercial, or Utility, imprinted with a roller stamp, run like a purple ribbon the length of the carcass, and appear on most retail cuts.

Meat grading is now on an entirely voluntary basis. With wartime controls removed, the continuance and expansion of meat grading depend entirely upon consumer demand for this service.

Inspecting meat for wholesomeness is another service carried on by the USDA, but under the Bureau of Animal Industry. Unlike quality grading, inspection is mandatory for all meats entering into interstate commerce. The film "Meats With Approval," described in the April 1946 NNL, deals with this service.

An explanation of terms used in grading meat is given in "A Consumers' Guide to U. S. Standards for Farm Products," Misc. Pub. 553, available from the Office of Information, PMA, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

NEWS OF STATE COMMITTEES

NEW YORK STATE.—The Rochester and Monroe County Nutrition Committee gave special emphasis during the past winter to "How To Get the Most From Your Food Dollar."

All member organizations and agencies carried this theme into their programs, since the high cost of living held priority in the minds of those responsible for family feeding. The Tuberculosis and Health Association gave a series of talks throughout the county on "Stretch the Food Dollar." The Red Cross stressed wise buymanship in all its classes, circulated exhibits stressing the subject, distributed illustrated printed material "Tips on Wise Buymanship," and gave several illustrated talks. Public school home economics classes developed special units on thrifty buying. The Gas and Electric Company included the theme in its weekly demonstrations and the Visiting Nurse Association gave its nurses special instruction along this line for dissemination to clients.

The committee, with the Women's Council of the Chamber of Commerce, sponsored a public nutrition institute which was directed not only toward family groups but also toward civic leaders and those offering guidance in family budgeting and the solving of nutrition problems. The Women's Council paid the expenses of a speaker, while various agencies prepared and contributed material on wise buying and recipes. Talks, demonstrations, and exhibits added interest. One exhibit showing foods that might be used in a week's market order for a family of four consisted of donations by local stores.

From September to January members of the nutrition committee prepared for the evening newspaper daily low-cost dinner menus and market orders. At the conclusion of this series the newspaper requested weekly articles of local interest. The chairman schedules these articles, which are written by nutrition workers in the various participating organizations, according to an over-all plan in order to provide continuity and prevent repetition.

NEW YORK CITY.—All agencies represented on the Central Harlem Nutrition Committee helped to carry on the Fifth Annual Neighborhood Food and Nutrition Week during April. The theme, "Wise Buying," was stressed in talks, exhibits, and demonstrations. During the week many neighborhood stores and health and welfare agencies cooperated by displaying posters and exhibits.

The State Food Commission Program in the Metropolitan Area has opened a

school for homemakers, with day and evening classes held weekly. A complete modern kitchen is used to demonstrate the program of "eat well for less," according to information in "Keeping Posted," the New York City Food and Nutrition Committee's monthly newsletter.

MAINE.—At a meeting of the State nutrition committee on May 10, it was reported that 453 schools in the State are participating in the school lunch program, with most of the lunches being type A. To insure each child getting his full allowance the pasteurized milk has been served in half-pint bottles.

Dr. Mary Clayton, newly elected chairman of the committee, showed some Kodachrome slides to illustrate defects which may be due to nutritional deficiencies, and discussed the nutrition survey that she has been making in two Bangor junior high schools this year. Physical examinations have been made of 450 children, special attention being paid to suspected nutritional deficiencies. Diet records were taken on the same children and blood samples were analyzed for hemoglobin, vitamin C, carotene, vitamin A, and phosphatase. The work is still in progress but the results indicate that folliculosis, inflamed gums, evidence of rickets, as well as changes in the tongue and eyes were present in some of these school children. Dr. Clayton is hoping to compare the nutritional status of children who have a hot school lunch with those who carry a cold lunch or who buy their lunch at a snack shop.

* * *

The Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics is receiving congratulations on its 25th anniversary. It was established July 1, 1923, as the Bureau of Home Economics, with Dr. Louise Stanley as Chief.

Sincerely yours,

M L Wilson

M. L. Wilson, Chief
Nutrition Programs

W H Sebrell

W. H. Sebrell, Consultant